



Committee on Higher Education and Employment Advancement

Testimony of The Connecticut Council for Education Reform

House Bill No. 5029 An Act Concerning College Readiness Assessments

Good Morning. My name is Rae Ann Knopf and I am the Executive Director for the Connecticut Council for Education Reform (CCER). The Council represents the business and civic voice in advocating for comprehensive education reform efforts to close Connecticut's achievement gap, while raising academic achievement for all students in our state.

I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 5029. This bill would require each tenth grade student that is enrolled in a public school to undergo an assessment of college readiness in the spring of his or her sophomore year. While the proposed bill correctly calls for the development of a remediation plan to ensure that each student is ready for college upon graduation from high school, the bill falls short on requiring that students who fail to demonstrate college readiness on the assessment in tenth grade, re-take and pass the assessment in order to graduate from high school. Based upon the success that other states such as Massachusetts have had with their required high school graduation assessments, CCER strongly supports the principle that each student must pass the tenth grade assessment to be eligible for a high school diploma.

At present, more than half of all Connecticut students entering our public two- and four-year colleges require immediate remediation in Mathematics or English. Setting high academic standards and holding students accountable for achieving them before they exit secondary school will go a long way towards addressing the overwhelming need for remediation amongst our high school graduates and prepare our

students for a future in which 65% of all jobs in Connecticut will require some post-secondary training beyond high school by the year 2018.

To ensure that every student graduates from high school not only college and career ready, but globally competitive, requires setting high academic expectations and providing academic interventions and supports from Pre-K through 12th grade.

Education reform efforts this session are a key component to providing every student in Connecticut with a high-quality education. Requiring a tenth grade assessment and additional academic supports is an important first step in this direction, but as a state, we must set a higher standard by requiring that each student not just sit for but *pass* the tenth grade assessment as a condition of eligibility for a high school diploma.

Thank you.

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